

right, is liable to induce the people to resort to illegal measures to assert their rights. But the exercise of a little patience and prudence, though causing a few day's delay, will in the end prove the more satisfactory course, for by following on this line the people will ultimately gain the desired end, without having recourse to force and probable bloodshed.

From one point of view the granting of the injunction may be looked upon as a benefit. It was evidently the intention of the provincial authorities to force a crossing as soon as the injunction was dissolved, without regard to the case as it stood before the Supreme Court. The removal of the injunction would therefore have brought about a collision between the opposing forces, with probably serious results. On the other hand the upholding of the interim injunction will have the effect of delaying further efforts to force a crossing until the Supreme Court has passed judgment upon the question.

The further effect of the continuing of the injunction is to restrain the operation of the Portage branch of the N. P. & M. system across the Pembina branch of the C. P. R., until the hearing of the cause, or until the approval of the railway committee of the Privy Council is obtained, as to the mode and place of crossing, or until further order of the court. The case now practically rests with the Supreme Court, and the real effect of the injunction will be to restrain the provincial railway commissioner from crossing the C. P. R. track with the Portage branch until the matter is dealt with by the Supreme Court, though in the meantime the case may go on here.

There seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding as to the position of the case before the Supreme Court. By an act of Parliament passed in 1883, it was provided as follows:

"The International, Grand Trunk, Canada Southern, and Canadian Pacific railways are hereby declared to be works for the general advantage of Canada, and every branch line or railway now or hereafter connecting with or crossing any of the said lines is a work for the general advantage of Canada. Every such railway and branch line shall be subject to the legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada."

Under the clause quoted above, which is a section of the railway act, the C. P. R. oppose the crossing of their line by the N. P. & M. Co. The railway act provides that no railway company shall avail itself of any of the powers relating to the crossing of another line without the ap-

proval of the Railway Committee of the Privy Council. Application was made to the railway committee by the Manitoba authorities, to make the crossings necessary to the operation of the Portage branch, and the application was opposed by the C. P. R. Under a clause of the railway act, where a question of law exists before the railway committee, the case may be stated in writing for the opinion of the Supreme Court. This is now being done, and the question will come before the Supreme Court this week. Should the decision be against the province, it will simply mean that all provincial railways which cross the C. P. R., main line or branches, will be subject to and be obliged to have the assent of the Dominion Parliament. This would place the province in a position little better than it occupied during the existence of the C. P. R. monopoly, for to be subject to Dominion legislation in railway matters means largely that railway matters here must remain under C. P. R. influences. Against such a condition of things it will be the duty of all Manitobans to protest strenuously, and to continue to protest until the obnoxious legislation is either defeated in the courts, or removed.

CHEAP POSTAGE RATES.

It is said that the Dominion postal authorities are considering the advisability of reducing the postal rate upon letters to two cents, instead of the present rate of three cents. This would apply to domestic letter rates and to international letter correspondence between Canada and the United States. The matter of revenue is of course an important point to be taken into consideration in the proposals to reduce postal rates. Should the two cent rate be adopted, it does not follow that the revenue from postage stamps would suffer a proportionate reduction. On the other hand, it is quite probable that the increased use of the postal service through the cheapening of the rates, would very materially help to make up the usual revenue. A reduction of the letter postage to two cents, would also likely induce a much larger use of letters, where postal cards are now used, thus increasing the revenue from this source. Considering these points, it is therefore quite probable that the revenue would suffer but slight falling off, should the proposed reduction be made in letter rates. The rate of letter postage in the United States is two cents, and this applies to letters coming into Canada. Should our Government decide to reduce

the rate to two cents, it would bring this country into line with the United States, and would make the international rate between the two countries equal to citizens of each. The proposed change would certainly prove a great convenience to our commercial community. There is a large amount of correspondence continually passing between the United States and Canada, but at the rates as at present constituted, the advantage is decidedly on the side of the correspondents to the south of the boundary. In newspaper postage, the regulations in force in this country are more liberal than in the United States, but in the latter country the letter rates are more liberal than here. In the United States the postal service is now practically self sustaining, and it has been proposed that the letter rate be reduced to one cent. Low postal rates are an incentive to commercial enterprise, and if the two cent letter rate is introduced in this country, it will not be without a beneficial result.

GOING TO OTTAWA.

A disposition has been shown in some quarters to find fault with Attorney-General and Railway Commissioner Martin, because he did not make application at the last meeting of Parliament for legislation empowering the construction of the provincial railways. It is a very easy matter now, after the deadlock has occurred, to say that such and such things should have been done beforehand. Certainly the present difficulty was never for a moment foreseen by anyone familiar with the situation, and everyone expected that the bill passed at the last session of Parliament entirely removed the difficulties in the way of the provincial roads. But it is by no means certain that the Dominion Parliament would have passed a bill for the construction of the provincial railways in Manitoba, even had application been made to that end. It will be remembered that the bill for the extension of the Galt railway in Alberta, was thrown out on a pretext, and applications from Manitoba would doubtless have shared the same fate. But there is another point which should not be forgotten. In this railway agitation Manitoba has all along been contending for a great principle, namely; the right to charter railways within the boundaries of the province. This principle has been the bottom, top and sides of the railway agitation throughout. To have applied to the Dominion for the privilege of building the roads, would have been equivalent to the desertion of the principle at stake, at the very moment that the people of Manitoba were rejoicing in the triumph of their cause. Those who shouted so loudly for provincial rights a few months ago, and who now attack Mr. Martin for neglect in not applying to Parliament for the privilege (we will not say the right) of building his roads, evidently have little regard for their past pretensions.